

splash!

quick facts on...

Coastal Watersheds Program

OCTOBER 2006

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts.

Our Mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems, and water supply.

2006 Key Accomplishments

- **Restoration plan for Northwest Fork of Loxahatchee River approved**
- **Flood mapping business plan approved by FEMA**
- **90+ local initiative projects under way in nine coastal water bodies totaling \$32.1 million**

The Coastal Watersheds Program develops scientific and technical information for the protection and restoration of coastal water bodies. This work provides the foundation for developing and implementing projects and flood management planning activities that improve the quality, quantity, timing and distribution of flows to coastal water bodies from their tributary watersheds.

The program supports the development of the technical criteria for Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) and water reservations, in partnership with the Water Supply Program, to provide scientific and technical support to the South Florida Water Management District priority projects. The program also supports the development of water quality targets that support the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) in seven of the nine water bodies within the program. Local initiatives such as flood management planning and stormwater improvement projects are implemented through this program in conjunction with the District's Service Centers.

The Coastal Watersheds program includes efforts to understand the effects of changing flows of fresh water to estuaries from both a water quantity and a water quality perspective, and to identify existing sources of water that protect and benefit fish and wildlife. This scientific information is focused largely on salinity, seagrass, and other biological indicators, and contributes directly to operational decisions related to the release of water from Lake Okeechobee. This program also implements numerous projects in partnership with "Initiatives" for the St. Lucie, Loxahatchee, and Caloosahatchee rivers; Biscayne, Estero and Naples bays; Indian River and Lake Worth lagoons; Charlotte Harbor; and the Florida Keys.

Agency Strategic Priority

Minimize impacts of the Central and Southern Florida system on the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries

Program Goal

To restore coastal watersheds and receiving water bodies through local partnerships and applied scientific research; to decrease flood damages District-wide through flood management planning



Coastal watersheds such as estuaries, lagoons and bays are important ecosystems and contribute directly and indirectly to the health of the environment. They also provide nesting areas and alternative feeding sites for birds, oysters and other species that are commonly found in many of Florida's coastal systems.

Strategies

- Complete restoration plans
- Increase understanding of the ecosystems through applied scientific hypothesis-driven research
- Develop technical criteria for proposed water reservations and Minimum Flows and Levels
- Work with local governments to implement coastal water body restoration projects

Success Indicators

- Percentage of Water Protection and Sustainability Trust Fund money committed to executed agreements with local governments
- Percentage of specific appropriations committed to executed agreements with local initiatives
- Percentage of scheduled MFL or water reservation technical criteria documents completed
- Percentage of water segments that fully meet, partially meet and do not meet their designated use
- Percentage of total stream miles and lake and estuary area in the District assessed for ambient water quality



Red mangrove forests are easy to recognize in a brackish water coastal estuary system with its stilt-like roots. This system is a valuable habitat for shrimp, fish, and other sea life.



JR10/04/06

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SERVICE CENTERS

Big Cypress Basin/Naples
 239-597-1505
 Broward
 954-713-3200
 Florida Keys (Plantation Key)
 305-853-3219 or 800-464-5067
 Lower West Coast
 239-338-2929 or 800-248-1201

Martin/St. Lucie
 772-223-2600 or 800-250-4100
 Miami-Dade
 305-377-7274 or 800-250-4300
 Okeechobee
 863-462-5260 or 800-250-4200
 Orlando
 407-858-6100 or 800-250-4250
 Palm Beach County
 561-682-2283 or 800-432-2045